

**HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL**  
**KE KANIHELA O KE KALANA O HONOLULU**  
CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU

No. 24-12

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**RESOLUTION**

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URGING THE CITY'S FIRST RESPONDER AGENCIES TO DEVELOP REASONABLE AND EFFECTIVE ACCESS TO DISPATCH RADIO COMMUNICATIONS.

WHEREAS, many government agencies utilize radio communications to dispatch public safety and public works personnel in response to emergencies and calls for services; and

WHEREAS, historically, such dispatch radio communications were broadcast on open and unencrypted channels that could be accessed by the media and the public; and

WHEREAS, the media have relied on their ability to monitor radio communications to disseminate emergency-related information to the general public, and a segment of the public has monitored dispatch radio communications as a means of keeping abreast of events occurring within the community; and

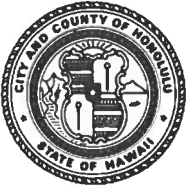
WHEREAS, radio encryption is a means by which government agencies may protect sensitive information transmitted over the airwaves from compromise and disclosure; and

WHEREAS, advances in digital technology have made such radio communication encryption more readily available and cost efficient; and

WHEREAS, recently, the City and County of Honolulu ("City") completed the conversion of its analog communications system to a digital communications system that encrypts first responder radio traffic, including the dispatch radio communications of the Honolulu Police Department; and

WHEREAS, media and public access to live dispatch communications has been replaced by email alerts that are available only to the news media and only after the alert has been composed by City staff; and

WHEREAS, the transition to an encrypted communications system prevents the public and media from accessing real-time dispatch radio communications, impedes government transparency, and blocks access to public information regarding emergency situations; and



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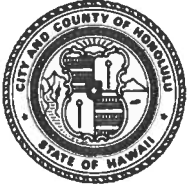
WHEREAS, there have been numerous recent instances of dangerous situations in populated areas, such as active shooters, armed and dangerous individuals and violent crimes, where accurate and timely information was not available to the media and the public; and

WHEREAS, in the wake of these dangerous events, members of the public have expressed concern that without access to the real-time police dispatch communications, they will not be able to keep themselves and their families safe from ongoing dangerous activities; and

WHEREAS, the City Council believes that, to the greatest extent possible, government operations should be conducted in an open and transparent manner; and

WHEREAS, the City Council recognizes that the City's first responder agencies' need to conceal certain sensitive information must be balanced against the media and public's need to have access to timely information regarding emergency situations; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City and County of Honolulu that each of the City's first responder agencies are urged to develop reasonable and effective policies and measures regarding media and public access to dispatcher radio communications that balance the interests of the public with the needs of the respective agency; and



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BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Mayor, the Managing Director, the Chief of Police, the Fire Chief, the Director of Emergency Services, the Director of Information Technology, the Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer of the Honolulu Authority for Rapid Transportation, the Chief Engineer of the Department of Facility Maintenance, the Director of the Department of Environmental Services, and the Director of Parks and Recreation.

INTRODUCED BY:



DATE OF INTRODUCTION:

JAN 5 2024

Honolulu, Hawai'i

Councilmembers